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SIPDIS

SENSITIVE  
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TAGS: [KCRM](#) [PHUM](#) [KWMN](#) [KJUS](#) [SMIG](#) [ELAB](#) [PREL](#) [PGOV](#) [GM](#)

SUBJECT: BERLIN POLICE RAIDS TARGET SUSPECTED TRAFFICKING  
ORGANIZATIONS

¶1. (U) On December 20, the Berlin Criminal Investigation Service's (LKA) office for combating trafficking raided eighteen locations in Berlin and executed eight arrest warrants. According to a press release issued by the Berlin LKA, police and Berlin prosecutors had been conducting investigations since 2005 against several different cooperating crime groups allegedly involved in severe trafficking, illegal pimping, kidnapping, personal injury, document forgery, and alien smuggling. The police found that at least twelve persons were involved in smuggling women from Eastern European countries into Germany with forged passports and forcing them into prostitution. Police allege three brothels in Berlin and five Internet agencies forced the women to prostitute themselves or used threats to prevent them from leaving.

¶2. (SBU) Police and prosecutors announced they will continue to question witnesses and evaluate evidence seized in the raids. According to the LKA's press officer, police investigators will conduct standard checks to determine whether illegal migrants identified in the raids are TIP victims. If so, police will work with NGOs and local authorities to ensure victims receive necessary counseling and social services and take steps to permit victims to remain in Germany as victim witnesses. Since the investigations are still ongoing, the LKA officer could not say whether and how many trafficking victims were found during the raids. It is unclear at this time when the suspects will be indicted.

¶3. (SBU) According to Heike Rudat, who heads the Berlin LKA's anti-trafficking office, the LKA's success in combating TIP is due primarily to the existence of a specialized office dedicated solely to TIP investigations. The office closely monitors the activities of brothels and Internet agencies in Berlin.  
KOENIG